



# California Conservation Corps Watershed Stewards Program in partnership with AmeriCorps WSP Applicant FAQ



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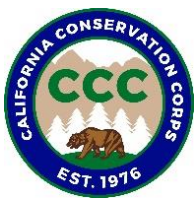
## General Questions

### I am a student. Can I be in the Watershed Stewards Program (WSP) while I am studying?

- WSP requires a full-time commitment (40 hours/week during regular business hours) and is not appropriate for current students.

### Do I need to turn in ALL of my application materials at the same time?

- **No** - You can turn in your application, and then send your cover letter, resume and letters of recommendation (LOR) as they are ready. We expect that most people will have LORs sent in separately from their application materials. All materials must be in by the application deadline.



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## Will WSP reimburse me for the costs involved in moving to California and find housing near my Placement Site?

- Sorry but no, WSP does not have the funds to provide relocation reimbursement.

## Do I qualify for Cal Fresh (food stamps) as a WSP Corpsmember?

- While we cannot guarantee that you will *qualify* for Cal Fresh, as it is based on your household income, WSP Corpsmembers often qualify for this benefit. The amount per month is dependent on the county (average \$200/month).

## If I choose to defer my college loans while serving with WSP, will they still accrue interest?

- **Yes** – your student loans will continue to accrue interest. However, if they are *eligible loans* you can place your loans into forbearance using the MyAmeriCorps portal, and you will then be eligible to have the accrued interest paid in full at the end of your term. We will share more information about this during WSP's Orientation.

## Am I required to have a car?

- **No/Yes** – Depending on your Placement Site location, it is strongly suggested you have a vehicle. Housing and services are often a distance from Placement Sites and public transport is not always available especially in rural areas. Some Placement Sites require Corpsmembers to use their personal vehicle for field work (they will be reimbursed). If you do not have a vehicle but are interested in the program, contact [wsp.recruiter@ccc.ca.gov](mailto:wsp.recruiter@ccc.ca.gov) to learn which sites may be the best match.

## What types of trainings does WSP provide?

- WSP host three or more trainings each year (Orientation, Regional Training, and Exit Retreat). The content of each training varies from year-to-year but includes:
  - Life After AmeriCorps – Career Coaching
  - Classroom management and teaching 101
  - Event Coordination and Facilitation
  - Communications Best Practices (public speaking, media outreach, project proposal development)

## What types of trainings do Placement Sites provide?

- Site training vary by site, see the Placement Site Summaries document for information about each site.

## What gear do I need to have for WSP?

- WSP will provide most field and uniform gear such as waders, wader boots, raingear, hats, PPE, pants/shirts, first aid kits, water filters, tent, sleeping bag, and lanterns.
- **WSP does NOT PROVIDE: hiking boots, sun glasses, or backpacks.**

## Does WSP provide health care?

- **Yes** – the CCC provides simple health insurance and CMs can opt to use this insurance but are not required to use the CCC insurance. More information will be provided if a position is offered.



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## What type of criminal charges would prevent me from enrolling with WSP?

- If the crime falls under the serious felony or violent crime section of the CA Penal Code, or if the application is on parole/probation, they are not eligible for AmeriCorps and are therforths not eligible for WSP.
- Convictions sealed under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 781 or Penal Code Section 1203.45 do not apply.

## Site-Specific Interviews

### Does my application packet get sent to all the Placement Sites I ranked in my preference list?

- **No** - your list of preferences is very helpful when we match up applicants with sites, but we do not always send your application packet to every site that you ranked. WSP staff decides which applicant packets will be sent to sites based on both the Corpsmember's interests and experience, and the site's needs.
- WSP may also send your application to sites you did not indicate as a preference if we feel you are a strong candidate and you have identified being flexible on your WSP Application.

### Can I contact Placement Sites directly to ask site-specific questions?

- **No** - because our program receives such a high volume of applicants each year, we ask that you communicate with WSP staff instead of directly with the Placement Sites. If you are chosen for an interview with the Placement Site, you will have an opportunity to communicate directly with them at that time.

### Can I re-rank my preferred sites after I have interviewed with Placement Sites?

- **Yes** - you can email your updated ranking preferences to [WSP.Recruiter@ccc.ca.gov](mailto:WSP.Recruiter@ccc.ca.gov) any time before site interviews are finished. Rankings cannot be changed after that date. Please only rank sites with which you have interviewed. If you marked flexible on your application, your materials may still be sent to additional Placement Sites for their review and a possible interview.

### If I am offered a position, will I get to choose which Placement Site I will serve at?

- **No** - candidates are offered a specific position at one Placement Site.

### If I am chosen for a position who will make the offer?

- WSP staff calls applicants to offer them positions. You will have several days to accept or decline.
- It is important that you notify WSP staff of any times that you may not be available by email or phone so that we can reach you regarding an offer.

## COVID

### How has COVID changed WSP Corpsmembers' (CM) experience?

- Depending on the Placement Site, some CMs are required to "teleserve" for part of their service.
- All WSP trainings have been held remotely but still prove to be effective at providing a platfrom to build the WSP community.
- WSP hosts monthly Zoom calls with all CMs to update them on program updates and field questions.



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- Teaching the WOW! curriculum is occurring both in-person when possible and remotely.
- When developing volunteer restoration events (Watershed Awareness Volunteer Events) CMs can only recruit 10 (instead of 30) volunteers.
- WSP is not able to provide Wilderness CPR/First Aid or Swift Water Training to CMs
- CMs are required to either provide current First Aid/CPR certification or find and attain the training before WSP's Orientation; CMs will be reimbursed for this training in this case.